

Message Text

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ORIGIN IO-03

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /004 R

66617

DRAFTED BY: IO/SCT:LNCAVANAUGH

APPROVED BY: IO/SCT - MR. TREVITHICK

IO STAFF ASST

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R 152003Z OCT 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

INFO USMISSION IAEA VIENNA 5333

UNCLAS STATE 245026

FOLLOWING REPEAT NEW DELHI 13712 SENT SECSTATE INFO BOMBAY
CALCUTTA MADRAS ISLAMABAD LONDON COLOMBO KATHMANDU DATED
OCT 13.

QUOTE

UNCLAS NEW DELHI 13712

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, IN

SUBJECT: MRS. GANDHI ON INDO-US RELATIONS AND NUCLEAR TESTING

THE GOI MADE AVAILABLE ON OCTOBER 12 THE FULL TEXT OF
AN INTERVIEW OF PRIME MINISTER GANDHI AND GEORGE
EVANS OF THE LONDON SUNDAY TELEGRAPH. OF INTEREST
WERE THE FOLLOWING EXCHANGES ON INDO-US RELATIONS AND
INDIAN NUCLEAR TESTING:

QUOTE

QUESTION: ON RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES, IT IS WIDELY
BELIEVED IN INDIA THAT AMERICAN MONEY HAS BEEN FED TO RIGHTWING
OPPOSITION PARTIES TO OPPOSE GOVERNMENT'S SOCIALIST
POLITICS. LEAVING FORD AND GOVERNMENT ENTIRELY OUT
OF IT DO YOU BELIEVE, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT CIA HAS MEDDLED
INDIAN AFFAIRS?
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P.M. THIS IS A RATHER DIFFICULT QUESTION TO ANSWER. WE READ ALMOST DAILY ABOUT CIA'S OMNIPRESENCE AND ITS MYSTERIOUS OPERATIONS. WE OURSELVES DON'T HAVE THE RESOURCES TO COLLECT SUCH INFORMATION BUT SOMETIMES THEIR MOVEMENTS HERE ARE A LITTLE SUSPICIOUS AND WHAT WE LEARN ABOUT THEIR DOING IN OTHER COUNTRIES DOES CAUSE US ALARM HERE. SO FAR AS GENERAL INDO-US RELATIONS ARE CONCERNED WE HAVE ALWAYS TRIED TO WORK FOR FRIENDSHIP AND WE HAVE RECEIVED A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF ECONOMIC AID FROM THEM. BUT POLITICALLY IT IS NOT A QUESTION OF OUR ASSESSMENT BUT THE ASSESSMENT OF THE UNITED STATES WHAT THEY THINK ABOUT THIS REGION AND WHAT IS OUR PLACE IN THEIR SCHEME OF THINGS.

MR. WILLIAM BUNDY WROTE RECENTLY IN THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS QUARTERLY THAT THE UNITED STATES HAD SET ALONG FAR BETTER WITH AUTHTARIAN REGIMES THAN WITH DEMOCRACY AND IT WAS CONSIDERATION OF GLOBAL STRATEGY WHICH PREVAILED IN SUCH MATTERS.

INDIA'S POLICY OF NON-ALIGNMENT HAS BEEN A SORE POINT WITH THEM WHICH THEY HAVE MENTIONED TO US. AND EVEN IN MY FATHER'S TIME THERE WERE ATTEMPTS BUILD UP, WHAT THEY CALL MORE "ACCEPTABLE" LEADERS EVEN WITH THE CONGRESS PARTY. WE CAN ONLY HOPE THEY WILL REALISE THAT COUNTRIES DON'T LIKE BEING PUSHED AROUND BY ANYBODY NOT JUST BY THEM BUT BY ANY COUNTRY AND THAT STABILITY IN INDIA IS A FACTOR FOR PEACE IN THIS WHOLE REGION.

QUESTION: PRESIDENT FORD HAS BEEN CRITICAL OF INDIA AND HAS NOW ANNOUNCED THAT HE WILL NOT BE COMING HERE THIS YEAR. HAS THIS SOURED RELATIONS A LITTLE FURTHER?

P.M. I WOULD NOT SAY THAT I DON'T WANT TO BOAST BUT WE ARE A LITTLE MATURE ABOUT THESE THINGS. IT DID SEEM ODD TO US THAT HE SHOULD MAKE THAT REMARK WHILE ON HIS WAY TO CHINA. I GET A VERY LARGE NUMBER OF LETTERS FROM AMERICANS SUPPORTING US.

QUESTION: IN VIEW OF INDIA'S ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES, HOW CAN RECENT NUCLEAR EXPLOSION BE JUSTIFIED. ARE FURTHER TESTS PLANNED?

P.M. SURELY IT IS BECAUSE OF OUR ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES THAT WE MUST TURN TO SCIENCE. WE DID NOT HAVE OUR EXPERIMENT TO MAKE A BOMB BUT TO SEE WHETHER IT COULD BE USED FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES AND DEVELOPMENT. THE COST WAS QUITE SMALL AND CAME FROM REGULAR UNCLASSIFIED

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BUDGET. AS TO WHETHER THERE WILL BE MORE TESTS THAT DEPENDS ON WHAT THE SCIENTISTS STILL HAVE TO FIND OUT.

QUESTION: IS THERE ANY INTENTION EQUIPPING THE COUNTRY WITH A NUCLEAR DETERRENT?

P.M. I DON'T THINK SO.
END QUOTESCHNEIDER UNQUOTE KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INTERVENTION, TEXTS, PRESS CONFERENCES, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION, NUCLEAR TESTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 OCT 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE245026
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: IO/SCT:LNCAVANAUGH
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750358-1145
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751054/aaaabwgj.tel
Line Count: 115
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN IO
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 SEP 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <10 SEP 2003 by MaustMC>; APPROVED <20 FEB 2004 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MRS. GANDHI ON INDO-US RELATIONS AND NUCLEAR TESTING THE GOI MADE AVAILABLE ON OCTOBER 12 THE FULL TEXT OF
TAGS: PFOR, TECH, IN, US, (GANDHI, INDIRA), (EVANS, GEORGE)
To: IAEA VIENNA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006